

Message Text

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TAGS PINT CO

SUBJ: PRES-ELECT LOPEZ TO GET EXTRAORDINARY POWERS; LIBERAL PARTY
ELECTS NEW LEADERSHIP

REF BOGOTA 6256

1. THE LIBERAL PARTY ELECTED A NEW LEADERSHIP OF EIGHT MEMBERS
AT ITS CONVENTION JULY 26/74 TO SUCCEED OUTGOING PARTY CHIEF
JULIO CESAR TURBAY AYALA WHO RESIGNED WITH ONE YEAR LEFT OF HIS
PERIOD OF SERVICE. IN HIS REPORT TO THE PARTY TURBAY WHO IS
PRES OF THE SENATE URGED THAT CONGRESS GRANT THE INCOMING PRES-ELECT
LOPEZ EXTRAORDINARY POWERS TO DEAL WITH FISCAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS
AND TO REORGANIZE THE DECENTRALIZED INSTITUTES. HE SAID:
"IN MANY OCCASIONS THE CONGRESS WILL BE ABLE TO LEGISLATE DIRECTLY
ON MATTERS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL SUBMIT TO IT FOR CONSIDERATION.
BUT IN OTHER ASPECTS SUCH AS FISCAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS AND THOSE
DEALING WITH THE ELIMINATION, MERGING, OR MODIFICATION OF THE
DECENTRALIZED AGENCIES, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO GRANT THE PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC EXTRAORDINARY AUTHORITY THAT WILL PERMIT THE
EXECUTIVE TO CONFRONT THE MANY PROBLEMS THAT HAVE DEVELOPED ON
THE NACIONAL SCENE."

2. IN A RADIO INTERVIEW JULY 28 LUIS VILLAR BORDA, PRES OF THE
CHAMBER OF REPS AND SEN GUSTAVO BALCAZAR MONZON WHO IS A MEMBER
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OF THE LIBERAL PARTY'S NEW DIRECTORATE SUPPORTED TURBAY. SINCE

THE LIBERAL PARTY HAS A SUBSTANTIAL MAJORITY IN EACH HOUSE OF THE CONGRESS, AND ONLY A SIMPLE MAJORITY VOTE IS REQUIRED TO GRANT THE PRES EXTRAORDINARY POWERS THERE SEEMS NO QUESTION THAT LOPEZ WILL GET THE POWERS IF HE WANTS THEM. ADDING A BI-PARTISAN FLAVOR TO THE ISSUE, FORMER CONSERVATIVE PRES MARIANO OSPINA PEREZ SAID JULY 28 THAT HE AGREED THAT THE CONGRESS SHOULD GRANT THE POWERS TO LOPEZ BECAUSE OF THE ECONOMIC EMERGENCY IN THE NATION AND SO THAT THE NEW PRES CAN DEVELOP HIS "CLEAR MANDATE."

3. THE LIBERAL PARTY'S NEW DIRECTORATE OF EIGHT MEMBERS WAS ELECTED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE DELEGATES, AND APPEARS TO BE DIVIDED ABOUT EVENLY BETWEEN LOPISTAS AND TURBAYISTAS. THE NEW PARTY DIRECTORATE IS AS FOLLOWS: SENATORS GERMAN ZEA HERNANDEZ AND VICTOR MOSQUERA CHAUX AND REPS ALBERTO SANTOFIMIO BOTERO AND JUAN SLEBY, ALL TURBAYISTAS AND SENS GUSTAVO BALCAZAR MONZON, JUAN JOSE TURBAY AND CARLOS CABALLERO CORMANE, ALL LOPISTAS. THE EIGHTH MEMBER IS FORMER SEN MARIA ELENA CROVO, ALSO A LOPISTA. CABALLERO, JUAN JOSE TURBAY AND SENORA DE CROVO WERE ALL FORMER MEMBERS OF LOPEZ' REVOLUTIONARY LIBERAL MOVEMENT (.4)).

4. WHILE THERE WAS SOME SPECULATION BEFOREHAND THAT FORMER PRES CARLOS LLERAS RESTREPO WOULD ALSO BE GIVEN SOME REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW DIRECTORATE AS A CONCILIATORY GESTURE BY LOPEZ AND TURBAY, THIS DID NOT OCCUR, ALTHOUGH BALCAZAR AT ONE TIME WAS A LLERAS SUPPORTER. LLERAS TOLD LEADERS OF THE COLOMBIAN CONFEDERATION OF WORKERS (CTC) ON JULY 25 THAT WHILE HE WOULD CONTINUE TO SPEAK OUT ON POLIT AND ECONOMIC MATTERS, HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN ENGAGING IN PARTISAN POLITICS AT THIS TIME.

COMMENT: LIBERAL PARTY UNITY HAS UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN STRENGTHENED BY TURBAY'S DECISION TO STEP DOWN AS PARTY CHIEF, THE ELECTION OF THE EIGHT MEMBER DIRECTORATE, AND THE CALL FOR EXTRAORDINARY POWERS FOR LOPEZ. WHILE TURBAY HAS BEEN ACCUSED CORRECTLY BY DISSIDENT LIBERALS OF PICKING HIS SUCCESSORS TO LEAD THE PARTY, HE HAS SUCCESSFULLY REMOVED HIMSELF FROM THE IMMEDIATE LIMELIGHT WHILE AT THE SAME TIME LEAVING NO DOUBT THAT HE STILL CONTROLS THE PARTY. BY GRANTING LOPEZ EXTRAORDINARY POWERS TO CARRY OUT KEY PARTS OF HIS PROGRAM, TURBAY AND THE OTHER LIBERAL LEADERS WILL AVOID DURING THIS CRITICAL PERIOD THE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONGRESS OF THE KIND OF REGIONAL AND PARTISAN BICKERING THAT HAS CHARACTERIZED THAT INSTITUTION DURING RECENT YEARS. VAKY

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